BRITISH COLUMBIA

BC STATS

Service BC
Ministry of Labour & Citizens' Services

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca

Issue: 07-02 January 12th, 2007

- **BC's population reaches 4,310,452, as of July 1st, 2006**
- **BC origin exports down 7.0% in November**
- **Housing starts in the province continue to decline, sliding 6.4% in December**

Population

- **BC's population grew 1.2% during the 12-month period ending July 1, 2006, reaching 4,310,452.** Central Okanagan (+3.0%) and Squamish-Lillooet (+2.7%) were the fastest-growing regional districts in this period. Four regional districts showed a drop in population over the last year, but of these, only Central Coast dropped by more than one percent.

  In 2006, almost 14% of BC residents were aged 65 and older and about one in five were under the age of 18. Nisga'a (30%), Central Coast (29%) and Vancouver Island West (29%) School District had the highest proportions of youngsters under the age of 18. On the other extreme, South Okanagan, Penticton and Qualicum, where at least a quarter of the population is aged 65 or older, were the oldest areas of the province. Those aged 85 or older make up the largest proportion of the population in the Okanagan and southern Vancouver Island regions. In 2006, about one in five seniors were aged 85 or older in Victoria and Vancouver's Westside. *Data Source: BC Stats*

The Economy

- **Exports of BC products slipped 7.0% (*seasonally adjusted*) in November, following two consecutive months of increases.** The value of shipments was down from October across all commodity groups. Slumps in exports of energy (-13.2%) and industrial & consumer products (-11.4%) were most instrumental in driving overall exports down. However, shipments of machinery & auto equipment (-8.7%) agriculture & fish products (-2.3%) and forestry products (-1.2%) also decreased.

  Exports to the US fell 3.9% mostly due to a decline in the value of forestry (-4.3%) and energy (-10.3%) shipments, although industrial & consumer products (-1.9%) and machinery & auto equipment (-1.4%) also dropped. Despite increases in the value of overseas shipments of forestry products (+3.7%), exports to destinations other than the US were also lower (-11.5%), reflecting substantial downturns across four other major commodity groups.

  At the national level, goods exports climbed 2.8% in November. Shipments of machinery & equipment (+2.8%), industrial goods (+3.1%), energy (+3.7%) and automotive (+5.4%) products were among those fuelling the growth. On the other hand, trade in forestry products (-2.2%) slowed. Canadian exports to the US (+3.6%) and the European Union (+10.6%) were up significantly in November, but commodities sent to Japan dropped 2.9%.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

- **The value of building permits issued by BC municipalities jumped 18.7% (*seasonally adjusted*) in November after rebounding (+29.4%) in the previous month.** Permits for residential projects were up 33.0%, while the value of permits issued for other types of buildings increased a more moderate 1.6%. Non-residential permits have shown continued volatility in 2006, and the latest increase was a far cry from the 121.3% upsurge in October. Permits issued for industrial projects more than doubled (+108.4%) in November and institutional & government (+5.1%) projects also increased. However, planned spending on commercial projects declined (-5.4%), following a 183.4% jump in October.

  Building permits increased in the Vancouver (+44.0%) and Abbotsford (+90.9%) areas, but Victoria (-61.5%), BC's other census metropolitan area, posted a substantive decline.

  Canadian permits climbed 3.0% in November, fuelled by increases in BC and Ontario (+2.5%). Permits were also up in Manitoba (+48.1%) and

Report — Travels from Japan to B.C.

Did you know...

When Canadians meet someone for the first time, the person's smile (39%) or eyes (36%) are what they notice most, well before other features like hair (11%), or voice (6%). *Source: Ipsos Reid*

parts of Atlantic Canada. Permits were off in Alberta (-1.0%) and Quebec (-18.0%).

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Compared to the same month of 2005, the value of building permits issued by BC municipalities was 15.7% higher (*unadjusted*) in November.** Planned spending on construction projects was up in all regions of the province except Nechako (-23.4%) and Cariboo (-14.5%), where big drops in the value of industrial and institutional & government projects offset increases in permits issued for other types of projects.

  Among other regions, Thompson-Okanagan (+6.3%) and Kootenay (+8.7%) were the only ones to post less than double-digit gains. Northeast (+51.7%) recorded the biggest increase, followed by North Coast (+34.4%), Vancouver Island/Coast (+18.7%) and Mainland/Southwest (+18.0%).

  Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

Housing

- **Housing starts in the province ended the year on a weaker note, slipping 6.4% (*seasonally adjusted*) in December on the heels of a similar decrease (-7.8%) recorded in November.** Starts have been volatile over the past couple of years, as the heated pace of new housing construction of the early 2000's continued to show signs of slowing. During 2006, starts in BC advanced 5.3%, which was slightly higher than 2005's increase (+5.1%), but still well below those of twenty percent or more recorded in the first four years of the decade.

  Canadian starts slipped (-7.8%) in December, with new building activity slowing or stalling in all provinces, except PEI (+20.0%). Starts declined most substantially in Nova Scotia (-25.0%), while other provinces recorded decreases ranging from -1.2% in Quebec to -19.0% in Alberta. Data Source: CMHC

- **During 2006, work began on 32,463 housing units in *urban* areas of the province.** Despite fewer starts in centres such as Vancouver (-1.7%) and Kelowna (-2.3%), robust activity in Victoria (+33.1%), Abbotsford (+19.3%), Prince George (+12.7%) and other smaller centres (+13.3%) pushed total urban starts up 4.3% over the 2005 level. Starts were up for both multiple (+3.1%) and single detached (+6.5%) housing. Data Source: CMHC

- **The cost of new housing in BC's largest metropolitan area continued to rise in November.** Home builders in Vancouver received an average of 8.5% more for their projects, while in Victoria (-0.3%), new housing prices were slightly lower than in the same month of 2005. Although building prices in the capital city were considerably lower (-4.1%) than in November of last year, rising land prices (+5.6%) nearly managed to offset the decline in selling prices of new homes. In Vancouver, on the other hand, the increase in the cost of houses (+13.1%) far outpaced that of land (+0.8%).

  Nationally, the cost of new housing advanced 11.4% during the twelve-month period ending in November. With the exception of Windsor (-1.2%) and Victoria (-0.3%), all 21 metropolitan areas surveyed showed increases in the cost of buying a new home. Calgary continued to lead the country, posting a 49.8% increase in new housing costs over November of last year. After Calgary, the most inflationary new housing markets were in Edmonton (+42.8%), Saskatoon (+12.7%) and Regina (+10.2%).

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

Health

- **In 2003, five percent of Canadians aged 12 or older (an estimated 1.2 million people) reported symptoms of conditions that cannot be identified through medical examination.** Approximately 1.3% of the population had chronic fatigue syndrome, one such condition characterized by medically unexplained physical symptoms. *Data Source: S.C. Cat. # 82-003-XIVE*

- **In 2002, nearly four percent of Canadian workers aged 25 to 64 experienced depression.** The workers most prone to depression included those who frequently worked evening or night shifts and those who worked in sales or service. *Data Source: S.C. Cat. # 82-003-XIVE*

For data originating from Statistics Canada, data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the catalogue number.

Infoline Report

Issue: 07-02
Jan. 12, 2007

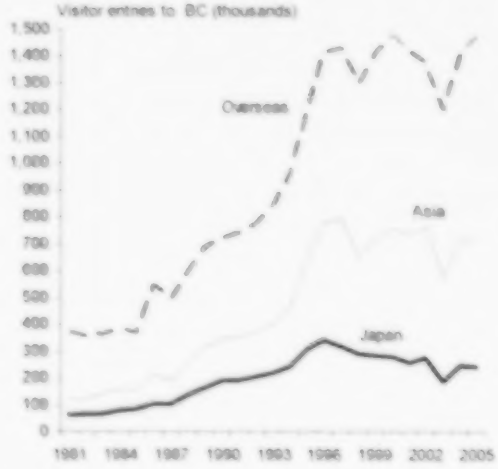
Contact: Ocean Lu (250) 387-1124
Originally published in *Tourism Sector Monitor* Issue 06-11. Annual Subscription $60 +GST

Travels from Japan to B.C.

Entries from Japan have slumped significantly since 1997

Asia is an important and growing tourism market for BC. In 1980, Asian entries accounted for roughly a third of total overseas entries to BC. By 2005, one in two overseas visitors to BC came from Asia.

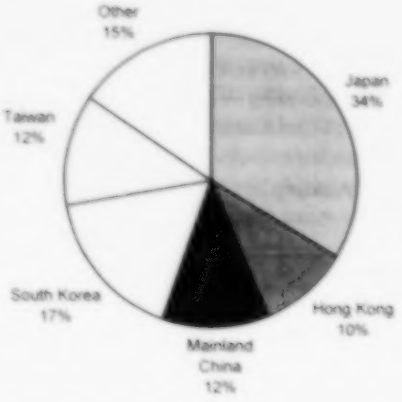
Asia has become an increasingly significant market



Data Source: Statistics Canada

Japan was the major source of visitor and the reason for the rapid growth in Asian entries during the first half of this period. Until the mid-1990s, travellers from Japan made up about half of all Asian entries. However, the situation has changed since the Japanese economic "bubble" burst during the Asian financial crisis of 1997-1998. Entries from Japan, which had accounted for about 50% of the total, now comprise about 30% of all Asian entries.

Entries from Japan are the major source of Asian visits



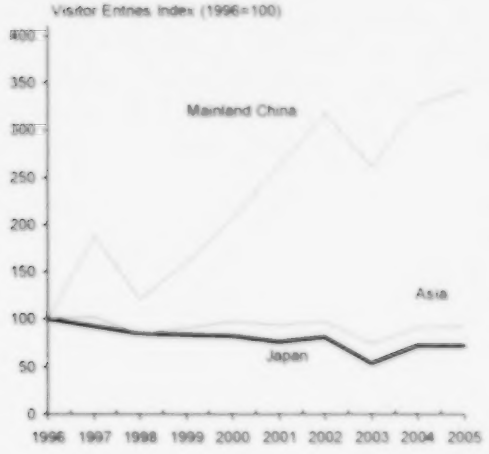
Data Source: Statistics Canada

The decline in Japanese entries during the mid-1990s was prolonged by many subsequent events. A recent study by the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) indicates that Canada's Japanese leisure tourism industry has been severely depressed for the last five years, largely due to the combined impact of 9/11, the SARS outbreak, the Iraq War, weak economies in Japan and abroad, a soaring Canadian dollar, and ongoing problems in the airline industry have caused a substantial decline in spending by Japanese visitors since 2000.

BC welcomed more than 243,400 visitors from Japan in 2005. This was 12.9% lower than in 2000, and represented a significant decline of 28.8% compared to 1996, when visits from Japan peaked. The downward trend in visitor entries from Japan to BC started in 1997 (-7.2%), when the Asian "flu" hit Japan, and the decrease continued through the turn of the century. The event of 9/11 also took its toll on Japanese visits (-7.9%). Although entries bounced back in 2002 (+7.6%), the growth was only short-lived. With the SARS scare in 2003

(-33.2%), visits from Japan slumped to their lowest level since 1990. This was followed by a quick recovery in 2004 (+33.0%), but the downward trend in entries from Japan continued in 2005 (-1.0%). Travel from Japan has continued to decline during 2006. A total of 174,072 people took trips to Canada via BC in the first nine months of 2006, showing a double-digit drop (-10.3%) compared to the same period of 2005.

Entries from Japan are declining but travel from the rest of Asia has picked up



Data Source: Statistics Canada

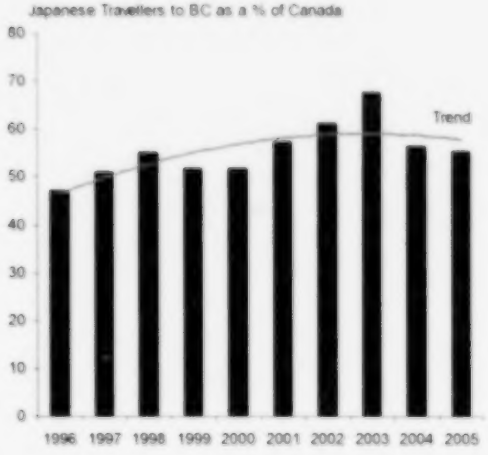
The decline in visitor entries from Japan to BC since 1997 is quite significant, especially compared with other major Asian markets[1]. Between 1996 and 2005, total visits from Asia fell 7.0%, even though entries from Mainland China more than tripled and visits from South Korea increased 44.1%. The SARS scare in 2003 had a significant negative impact on entries from most Asian countries. Although entries from Taiwan declined the most (-35.2%) in 2003, visits from Japan (-28.8%) also plunged.

The long-run decline in visits from Japan has changed the composition of Asian travellers to BC. Although Japanese travellers are still the biggest source of visitors from Asia, the proportion of Japanese visits out of total number of Asian travellers has decreased from a high of 48% in 1995 to 34% in 2005. Mainland China has been continuously outperforming Hong Kong since 1999, and became another major source of Asian entries in 2004 (11%) and in 2005 (12%).

Japanese visitors favour BC as the point of entry to Canada

Since 1995, there have been more visitors from Japan choosing BC over Ontario as their point of entry to Canada. About 56% of visitors from Japan entered Canada via BC in 2005, 10 percentage points more than in 1995 (46%). Fewer Japanese travellers chose Ontario (32%) as their point of entry in 2005, which was down from 45% in 1995.

Japanese visitors favour BC as their point of entry to Canada



Data Source: Statistics Canada

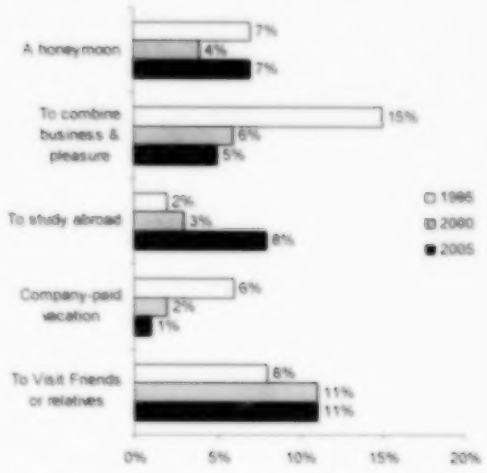
[1] Major Asian markets include Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, China (mainland) and Hong Kong.

The CTC study suggests that the Vancouver region and Niagara Falls continue to be ranked as the top travel destinations for Japanese visitors. However, popular destinations such as Vancouver, Victoria and Banff have seen significant declines in Japanese visitors in recent years.

Travel patterns and trip Characteristics

The CTC study also indicates that Canada remains a popular destination for honeymooners (7%) and those visiting friends or relatives (11%). However, the number of travellers combining pleasure trips with business has declined notably. This is not unexpected in view of the continued challenges in the Japanese economy since the mid 1990s, which has resulted in declining business travel and company-paid vacations, offsetting this trend was an increase in students travelling to Canada to study.

Fewer business travel and company-sponsored vacations from Japan to Canada



Data Source: 2005 Japanese Travel Consumer Study, Canadian Tourism Commission

Pre-conference Workshop

"Statistics for Market Analysis"

Through lectures, discussions, and a case study, workshop participants will learn how to incorporate statistics into business and economic planning. The workshop covers information about Statistics Canada data that you can use for market analysis and positioning in order to take advantage of business opportunities.

March 5, 2007 8:30am - 4:30pm
Workshop Fee: $95.00 + GST
(Not included in conference fee)
Register early, space is limited!

Welcome! Networking Reception & Entertainment

Featuring a live performance by Intellifunk - 2006 Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards Finalists for Best Blues Album and Best Group.

March 5, 2007 6:00pm - 9:00pm
Location: Victoria Conference Centre, 720 Douglas St.

Conference Accommodation

Until Feb 3/07, a special rate of **$90.00** per night is available at
The Fairmont Empress Hotel
721 Government Street
Victoria, BC
Toll free: 1-800-441-1414
Email: theempress@fairmont.com
For on-line reservations: quote GRTOL1
For phone reservations: quote TOOLS7

Exhibitor Booths & Trade Show

Space is available to promote your business or organization. For more information and rates, please contact conference registrar.

Statistics Canada will only use your information to complete the sales transaction, announce product updates and administer your account. From time to time, we may offer you other Statistics Canada products and services or ask you to participate in our market research. If you do not wish to be contacted again for promotional purposes ☐ and/or market research ☐ check as appropriate and fax or email this page to us, fax 604-666-6680, or email promotions@toolsforsuccess.ca

TO REGISTER:

Please send your completed registration form to:
Pascale Jean-Louis, Conference Registrar
Statistics Canada
#600 - 300 West Georgia Street
Vancouver, BC V6B 6C7
Phone: (604) 666-0344 Fax: (604) 666-6680
Email: pascale.jean-louis@statcan.ca

REGISTRATION

This information will appear on your ID badge, please print clearly.

Name: _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

_____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov: _____

Postal Code: _____

Phone #: _____ Fax #: _____

Email: _____

Pre-conference Workshop - Mar 5/07 $95 + GST $_____

Conference - March 6/07

Early Bird (before Feb 14/07)	$149 + GST	
Regular Rate	$199 + GST	
Group of 5 (before Feb 14/07) (attach list of names, titles and organizations)	$550 + GST	$_____
	TOTAL:	$_____

Method of Payment

Credit Card: ☐ VISA ☐ Mastercard ☐ AMEX

Card No: _____

Cardholder's name: _____

Expiry date: _____

GST exempt No: _____

Federal depts: IS code _____

Org code: _____ Ref # _____

If paying by cheque or money order, please make payable to the "Receiver General of Canada" and enclose with your registration.

Cancellation Policy: The registration fee will be refunded (less a $75 administration charge) if written notice is received by Feb 14/07. After that date, no refund will be given.

Aussi disponible en français

Statistics Canada's Strategic Conference Series presents

TOOLS for SUCCESS:

Using Data in Aboriginal Communities

Victoria Conference Centre
720 Douglas St.
March 6, 2007
Victoria, B.C.

Hosted by:

Statistics Canada / Statistique Canada

BC STATS Service

Sponsored by:

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada / Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada

Human Resources and Social Development Canada / Ressources humaines et Développement social Canada

AGENDA

Monday, March 5th, 2007

Pre-conference Workshop

8:30am - 4:30pm	**Pre-conference Workshop "Statistics for Market Analysis"**

Reception & Entertainment

5:00pm - 7:00pm	**Conference Registration Opens**
6:00pm - 9:00pm	**Reception & Live Performance by Intellifunk**

Tuesday, March 6th, 2007

Conference Agenda & Exhibits

7:00am - 8:00am	**Conference Registration Opens**
8:00am - 5:00pm	**Exhibits Open**
8:00am - 8:45am	**Continental Breakfast**
8:45am - 9:30am	**Welcome & Opening Remarks**
9:30am - 10:30am	**Plenary Session**
10:30am - 10:50am	**Break**
10:50am - 12:00pm	**Breakout Session I**
12:00pm - 1:30pm	**Luncheon & Keynote Speaker** *Chief Clarence Louie, Osoyoos Indian Band*
1:30pm - 2:45pm	**Breakout Sesson II**
2:45pm - 3:00pm	**Break**
3:00pm - 4:15pm	**Breakout Session III**
4:15pm - 4:45pm	**Summary & Closing Remarks**

SPEAKERS

Social & Community Development

- Dan Beavon, Indian & Northern Affairs Canada
- Lauren Brown, Xaaynangaa Naay Skidegate Health Centre
- Linda Day, BC Aboriginal Capacity and Developmental Research Environment
- Eric Guimond, Indian & Northern Affairs Canada
- Cheryl Matthew, Centre for Native Policy & Research
- Marie Patry, Statistics Canada
- Gwen Phillips, Ktunaxa Nation
- Michael Sadler, First Nations Social Development Society
- Christa Williams, First Nations Education Steering Committee

Economic Development

- Chief Ron Ignace, Skeetchestn Band
- Grand Chief Ed John, National Aboriginal Economic Development Board
- André Le Dressay, Fiscal Realities Economists
- Chief Clarence Louie, Osoyoos Indian Band

Labour Market Development

- Keith Conn, Human Resources & Social Development Canada
- Keith Henry, Métis Nation of BC
- Zeno Krekic, Skeena Native Development Society

Breakout sessions will take place during the conference. Conference registrants will be asked to indicate their session preferences at the time of conference registration. Conference organizers will do our best to accommodate all requests, however, we reserve the right to limit the number of people attending any one session based on room capacity.

Aussi disponible en français

What is the conference about?

Join us as leaders and experts from Aboriginal, academic, business, community, and government organizations share their best practices, experiences, success stories and challenges using data for planning and decision-making.

Conference features:

- Pre-conference workshop *"Statistics for Market Analysis"*
- Keynote speaker: ***Chief Clarence Louie, Osoyoos Indian Band***
- Plenary and breakout sessions

Who should attend?

Do you work in an Aboriginal social, community, or economic development field? Leaders, managers and planners need to make decisions that address the needs of today and prepare for the challenges of the future. The ability to use data to understand trends and project impacts is critical to effective strategic planning and decision-making. As well, this conference is a great learning and networking opportunity for those seeking ideas and information on how to use data effectively.

Conference Artwork

Eagle Welcome was created by Alano Edzerza of the Tahltan Nation (Raven Clan). Eagle Welcome was inspired by the idea of celebrating Aboriginal people walking in both worlds.

www.toolsforsuccess.ca

Infoline

January 12, 2007
Issue 07-02

fax transmission information service from **BC STATS**

Email transmission information service from **BC STATS**

also on the Internet at **www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca**

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Oct 1/06	% change on one year ago
BC	4,327.4	1.2
Canada	32,730.2	1.0
GDP and INCOME (Revised Nov 8)	2005	% change on one year ago
(BC - at market prices)		
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	168,855	7.2
GDP *($ 1997 millions)*	145,501	3.7
GDP *($ 1997 per Capita)*	34,173	2.4
Personal Disposable Income *($ 1997 per Capita)*	20,983	2.4
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Oct	3,522	0.9
Merchandise Exports - Nov	2,576	-7.0
Retail Sales - Oct	4,483	-0.1
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on	12-month avg
(all items - Nov 2006)	one year ago	% change
BC	1.5	1.7
Vancouver	2.1	1.8
Victoria	0.9	1.6
Canada	1.4	2.1
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)	Dec '06	% change on prev. month
(seasonally adjusted)		
Labour Force - BC	2,341	0.8
Employed - BC	2,218	0.4
Unemployed - BC	123	7.4
		Nov '06
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	5.2	4.9
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	6.1	6.3
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Jan 10/07	Jan 11/06
Prime Business Rate	6.00	5.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	6.30	5.80
- 5 year	6.45	6.30
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Jan 10/07	Jan 11/06
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $	1.1772	1.1580
US $ *(reciprocal of the closing rate)*	0.8502	0.8633
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE	Dec '06	% change on one year ago
(industrial aggregate - dollars)		
BC	739.16	4.6
Canada	731.18	2.7

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

Updates and additions to our site

Many of the documents posted to our site include annual time-series and we update these as the information becomes available. Many such series are now being extended to include 2006. When we make these updates we post a note to the recent releases listing on our what's new page.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/whatsnew.asp#recent

Many of these documents are in PDF format and we continue this practice. In addition, increasingly we provide CSV equivalents for clients who require access to the data.

Population Estimates

for Regions and Municipalitites, 2006

Released Friday, December 15th.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/pop/estspop.asp

Small Business Quarterly (FREE)

This longstanding periodical is now available for free on our site. Check out the latest issue (including data tables) and browse previous articles (previous articles have always been free for all our subscription periodicals).

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/pubs/pr_sbq.asp

Released this week by BC STATS

- Earnings & Employment Trends, December 2006
- Tourism Sector Monitor, December 2006
- Exports, November 2006

Next week

- No subscription releases

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